

ORIGIN/ACTION

Approved For Release 2007/02/07 : CIA-RDP70B00338R000300020002-1

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

② AIRGRAM

PRB 9 IRAQ

FOR RM USE ONLY

RM/R

REP

AF

ARA

EUR

FE

NEA

CU

INR

E

P

IO

L

FBO

AID

AGR

COM

FRB

INT

LAB

TAR

TR

XMB

AIR

ARMY

CIA

NAVY

OSD

USIA

NSA

A- 651

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

HANDLING INDICATOR

TO : Department of State

INFO : AMMAN, BASRA, BEIRUT, CAIRO, DAMASCUS, JIDDA, KUWAIT,
SANA'A, TEL AVIV

FROM : Amembassy BAGHDAD

DATE: April 5, 1967

SUBJECT : Press Review March 30 - April 5

REF : Embassy's A-646, April 5, 1967; Embassy's A-648, April 5, 1967

University Elections. The Baghdad press was united in expressing serious and persistent concern during the week over the results of the university student elections where because of a "rift in the nationalist ranks," the "anarchists and shu'biyin" (read communists in both instances) were able to capture a majority of the positions. Several papers openly blamed the university's administration and by strong implication the regime for permitting elections at this time.

Journalist Complaints. On April 5 al-Jumhuriya (GOI organ) and al-'Arab* published the details of President Aref's press conference with the Administrative Committee of the Iraqi Journalist Association the previous day. Apparently the journalists also took the opportunity to complain about an April 1 television program whose participants attacked the level of Iraqi journalists. They offered their resignations from the Committee to the President by way of protest. The President reportedly encouraged the group to continue its admirable efforts and stated that henceforth GOI official communications media will not be used to attack the Iraqi press. In this connection al-'Arab on April 4 carried a long and bitter commentary on the sorry plight of Iraqi journalists who on the one hand are expected to perform a responsible nationalist mission but who on the other hand are given no freedom or official encouragement and are then criticized for their low standards.

Comment: No doubt about it, the Iraqi press is in a bad way.

Criticism of U.S. Activities in Area. Following American press reports of CIA financial support to various organizations, some Iraqi papers have

State Dept. review completed

Exempted from automatic decontrol.

FORM 4-62 95-323

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

FOR DEPT. USE ONLY

☒ In ☐ Out

Drafted by:

POL: TJS/mer: 4/5/67

Contents and Classification Approved by:

POL: GVMcClanahan GVM

Clearances:

USIS: PAO/ATK/11/1/67

GVM for

DCM: ESDuncan

Approved For Release 2007/02/07 : CIA-RDP70B00338R000300020002-1

25X1
1967 APR 12 AM 9 30

Baghdad A-651

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

2

been accusing several American organizations such as the American Friends of the Middle East and the Ford Foundation of obtaining funds from that Agency for espionage purposes and have called for an investigation of their activities in the area (see Embassy's A-646, April 5, 1967). On April 5 al-Manar*, however, carried a story from the Damascus paper al-Thawra (much quoted by al-Manar these days) which among other things quoted statements by Senator Hugh Scott allegedly accusing AFME of being an anti-Israeli organization. It will be interesting to see if and how this kind of accusation will be locally interpreted.

Suspicious Meeting of American Diplomats. Inspired by some Beirut and Damascus papers, several Baghdad dailies also attributed sinister motives to the recent Executive Management seminars for American Foreign Service officers held in Beirut and sponsored by the FSI (see Embassy's A-648, April 5, 1967).

April Fool. Al-Akhbar* was the only Baghdad daily to note the occasion with banner headlines on April 1 announcing the alleged explosion in the western desert of Iraq's first atomic bomb.

STRONG

E/10

*Although some variations are permitted, all Iraqi papers are subject to government direction.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE